1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated; at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding consideration was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation --were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night, about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[1] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

[578
764]

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881
574]

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

[881]

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[1] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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584 lowed this order because, in Tiwi life, infant bestowal was reserved for fathers,
163 and a Tiwi was at least a middle-aged man before he became a father at all. Before he could have a daughter to bestow, he had to be the father of one; and before he could become a father, he had to have a baby girl bestowed upon him and wait for her to grow up to child-bearing age. The much-married Ki-in-kumi did not have his first actual daughter (as distinct from wives' daughters begotten by previous husbands) until he was forty-five, and Enquirio was closer to fifty than to forty when his first real daughter was born. We are inclined to call such daughters free or unencumbered daughters since the step-daughters brought into a man's household by widows, even young widows, were already bestowed by act of the widows' previous husbands and the new husband's control over their marriage was therefore encumbered by the dispositions made by his predecessors.

584 Thus most men did not have and could not expect to have any free or unencumbered daughters to bestow until they were well into their forties. By that time a man was a prisoner of his past. When at last he had free daughters he was no longer a free man but a junior elder with a mass of obligations both to older men and to younger men, which he had contracted in the previous twenty or thirty years. Even his initiation, which had started when he [881] was only about fifteen, left him under obligation to the older men who had initiated him. Any bestowals he had received had almost necessarily come to him from older men. In his thirties, it is true, he had operated in the widow remarriage area and put some older men under obligation to him by acting as their agent. But in his agency activities he had also contracted debts, usually in fee-splitting or log-rolling agreements with other agents of about his own age. Thus all his past activities, from his initiation at fifteen until the arrival of his first free daughter at (let us say) age forty-five, were on balance a story of obligations contracted and debts of gratitude assumed in his career of upward mobility. The more successful he had been up to now, the stronger the pressure on him to begin paying off those who had helped him, since it was assumed that his very success was a clear indication of how much obligation he must have to other men, especially older men and contemporaries.

584 If this line of reasoning had been the only relevant one, a Tiwi of age
557 forty-five just presented with his first free daughter would have had problem enough deciding which of his many obligations to liquidate first by his bestowal decision for that daughter. Unfortunately he was at the age when he had to consider the future as well as the past. Some of his old obligations were to men who were very old and unlikely to live much longer. Others were to men of his own age with whom he had been partners ten years before, but by now it was clear that some of these would never amount to much and paying them [654] off would reap no dividends for the future. Failure to meet the obligation might incur their enmity, but in view of their lack of success, perhaps their hostility was a lesser evil. In 1929, Gitjara, who had needed L. F. B. to get his own career launched, was ready to drop him as a partner now that Gitjara had attracted favorable notice in the form of two bestowals. The junior elders, though obligated to older men like Ki-in-kumi, were not bestowing their scanty

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus. Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony, when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners' state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests. The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems; indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1931.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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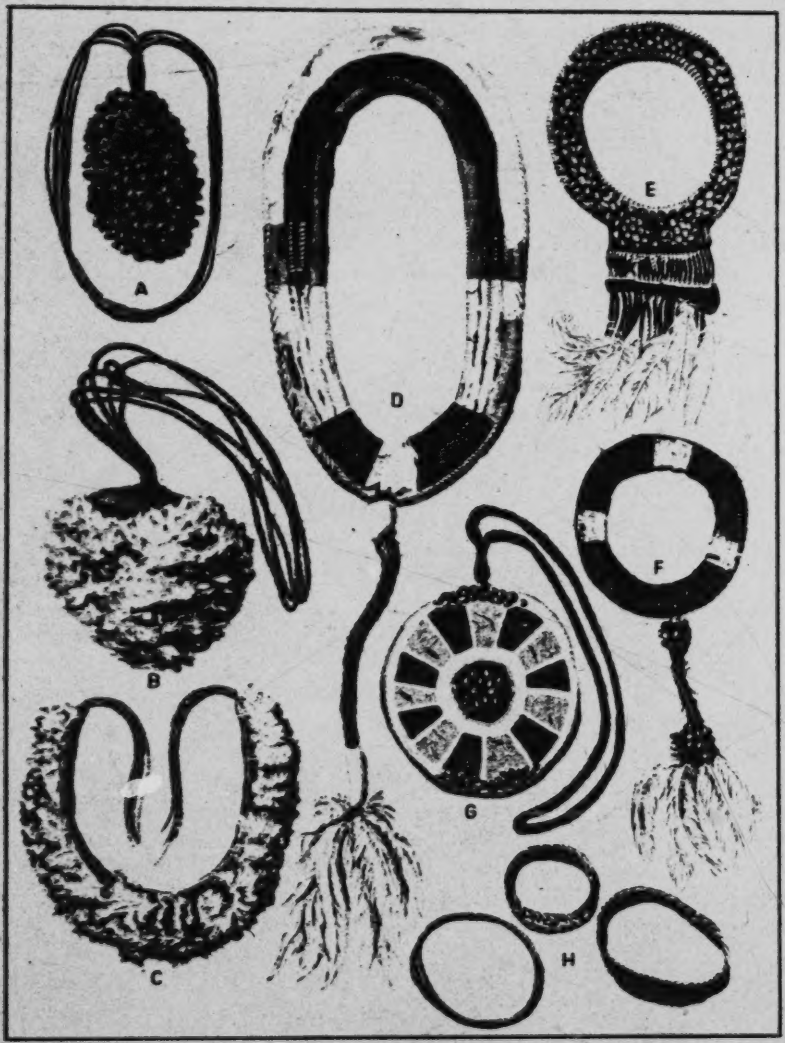

PLATE 31. *Ceremonial Decorations*
A, D, C, Chest Ornaments, Pukabinda; B, Goose-feather Ball, Tokwianga; C, False Beard, Bakadi; E, F, Arm Ornaments, Palmatjinna; H, Cane Arm Bands, Jairinis.

[p. 84 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings (except Pl. 28B), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in direct contrast to the designs painted on the *tudini* burial poles, where few, if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places.

A Waiyeniati Initiate

Pl. 28A is the facial design of a *Waiyeniati* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony (p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatara*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupalitju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purujitini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novae-zealandiae*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony.

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28B, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolizes the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tudiwala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tudiwala*, represented on Pl. 28C, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tudiwala* fought with *Kumuniu*, the salmon man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tudiwala*.

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28F).

The Fish, Mungumini

Pl. 28D is a facial design, called *Mungumini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pakadingu

Pl. 28E, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadingu*, and the dangerous *Maratji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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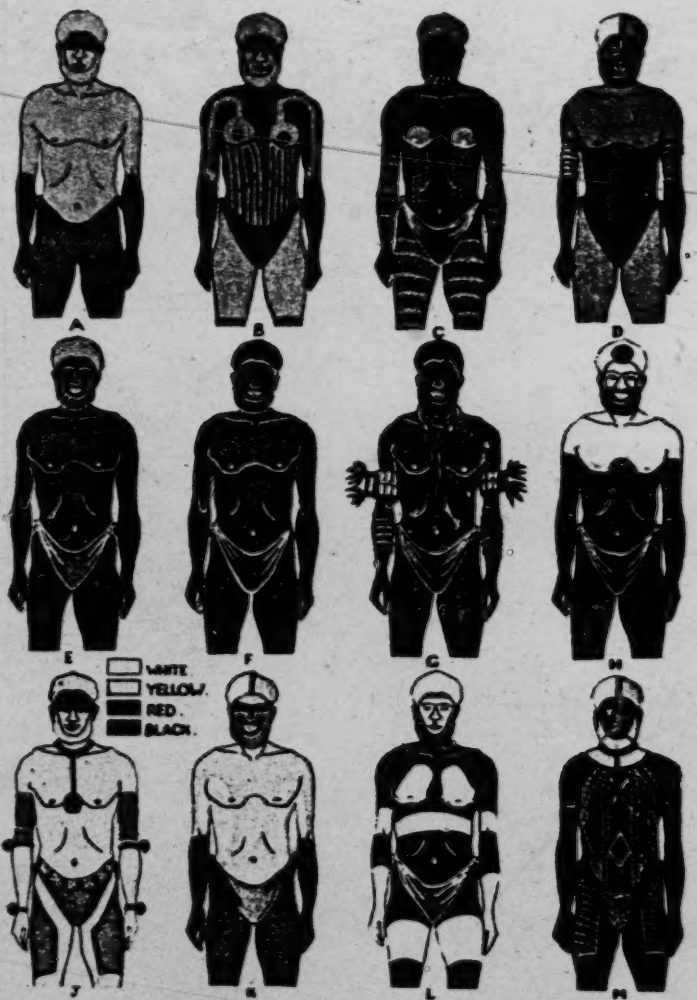

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PLATE 42. *Body Decorations of the Kulama Initiation*
A, B, C, D, E, F, Marukumuni; G, Kilipaniati; H, Wadjeniati; J, K, Mikinatrina; L, Kulama Design; M, Mikinatarima, Mikintara and Mikingula.

[p. 120 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER IV

The Kulama Ceremony

114 881 ALTHOUGH little has been recorded about the colourful *pukumani* burial rituals of the Tiwi, several investigators have published details of the *kulama* ceremony.

Spencer saw a *kulama* ceremony during March 1912. His records of those rituals (Spencer, 1928, pp. 658–76), the most complete we have, show that, [178] during the last forty years the pattern has not changed to any extent. Although the names of the initiation grades given by Spencer do not agree with those recorded by later investigators, it is likely these differences are due to Spencer's interpreter, the buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who was not then fully conversant with the ceremony.

Fry (1949, p. 176), during 1913, witnessed an initiation ceremony in which Reuben Cooper, Joe Cooper's half-caste son, passed from the *Koliponiati* (my *Kilipaniati*) stage to that of a *Wadjeniati*.

In the same year Fry (1950, pp. 79–80), saw the closing phases of the *kulama* from the peeling of the yam (p. 138), to the final rituals (p. 142). Although Fry was mistaken in considering that this ceremony was part of a burial rite, his record is a valuable and accurate description of the last two days of the *kulama*.

Hart (1930, p. 286), recorded the *kulama* initiation names and the duration of the grades of both male and female initiates. These names correspond closely to those I was able to obtain from the fully initiated men, with one exception. Hart stated that the grade of *Mikingula*, i.e., the fully initiated, lasted for four years. This is obviously incorrect, as the *Mikingula*, being the final grade, lasts for life.

178 881 It appears certain that Tiwi initiation has ceased, although, I feel sure, within comparatively recent times. The *Mikingulas* often talked about initiating some of their companions, but when the opportunity came, they procrastinated.

115 881 However, the same fully initiated men gave me full details of the rituals at each stage of initiation, explained how those rituals fitted into the *kulama* rituals we had witnessed, and either decorated themselves, or painted designs

2: Mountford E-S (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of initiation.

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men.

I. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaneri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purutjikini*, a boobook owl-man, and his wife, *Pintoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ningauis*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Mauwini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupai*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle.

Tukimbini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Mitinatrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[18] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaneri* (creation period). It was then that *Purutjikini*, the leader

[18] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purutjikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kulalumruniti group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died.

The Kulalumruniti people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ningauis*. The more elderly informants, *Tjantalampua* and *Mahuaruinia*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pirauma*, the
881 barn owl, *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakai*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupatupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ningauis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purujikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its proceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The
[753] aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called *tsini* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

776 The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[10] which made the
[533] [10] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jikungilakuni*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Wanimpuri* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

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776 place so dark, and the trees bend together so closely that the hunters lost their way and died. Some informants stated that the *Ningauis* cast a short throwing stick, similar to a *murugana*, at all trespassing aborigines, rendering them insensible.

According to my informants, the *Ningauis*, who gather their food only at night, do not, at present, know the way to make fire, although they were able to do so at the time of the second *kulama*. Therefore, the crabs, shellfish and toredo worms they collect from the swamps, and the edible plants from the nearby jungles, have to be eaten raw.

X 532 Two bark paintings and two crayon drawings deal with the *Ningaui* myth. On Plate 22D, the upper space, *a*, is a muddy flat in the middle of the mangrove island of Imaluna. At *b*, is an adjacent jungle; at *c*, a stream of fresh water nearby, and at *d*, *e*, are large dead eucalyptus trees lying in the water. At *f*, and *g*, are two pandanus trees; at *j*, *j*, salt-water creeks in the mangrove swamps; at *k*, *k*, etc., is the sea-shore at the mouth of those creeks, and cross-hatching at *m*, *m*, etc., the mud at the base of the mangrove trees. The squares, *h*, *h*, *h*, *h*, are the camps of the *Ningaui* people.

Plate 22C illustrates the footprints of the *Ningaui* in the swamps at Imaluna. The horse-shoe shaped designs are marks made in the mud by the front of the feet and toes, while the irregular circles, show the prints of the heels. The toe-marks are usually yellow and the heel-marks red. The dots are mangrove trees in the Imaluna swamps.

Fig. 10 is the copy of an aboriginal crayon drawing of a *Ningaui* on the mangrove island at Imaluna.

The central figure is a *Ningaui* standing on the roots, *a*, of a mangrove tree, which, in turn, is growing from a pile of rocks, *b*, *b*, *b*. On either side of the central figure are conventionalized mangrove trees, *c*, *c*; the designs on the lower portion represent the marks on the trunk, and on the upper portion, the foliage. At *e*, is a branch, and at *d*, a pandanus palm.

X 532 Fig. 11 is a copy of another crayon drawing which illustrates the *Ningauis* ●881 holding the second *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina. The oven for cooking the *kulama* yam is at *a*, the dots surrounding it representing the upright sticks which keep the firewood in place.[17] The darker circle is the low mound of earth surrounding the ceremonial ground, on the inside of which a number of men are parading and chanting the *kulama* songs. Symbol *b*, indicates the leader of the *kulama* ceremony.

The symbols in circle *c* are the *Marukumuni* and *Mikinatrina* initiates, who do not take part in those particular rituals, and symbols *d*, in the outside

[17] See Pl. 45A.

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circle, the women and children looking on. The designs radiating from the central circle represent a forest of eucalyptus trees.

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FIG. 11. *The Kulama Ceremony*
The Ningauis Performing the Second Kulama Ceremony.

KULAMA INITIATION

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881

Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Marukumuni	Male	From approximately April until next Kulama
Marukumuninga	Female	
Kilipuinini	Male	From Kulama, mid-March until the fruiting of the cycad, about mid-July
Kilipuiningo	Female	
Wuliuinini	Male	From mid-July until the eating of the edible yam, at the next Kulama
Wuliuiningo	Female	

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Grades of Kulama initiates		Period of initiation
Mikinatrina	Male	2 years
Mikinarrininga	Female	
Mikintara	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikintaringa	Female	
Mikiatarima	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatarimiuga	Female	
Mikingula	Male	Fully initiated for life
Mikingulinga	Female	

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

[302] [301]

[178] [114]

[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 665) refers to young boys, while Reuben Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipaniari*.

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marukumuninga*.

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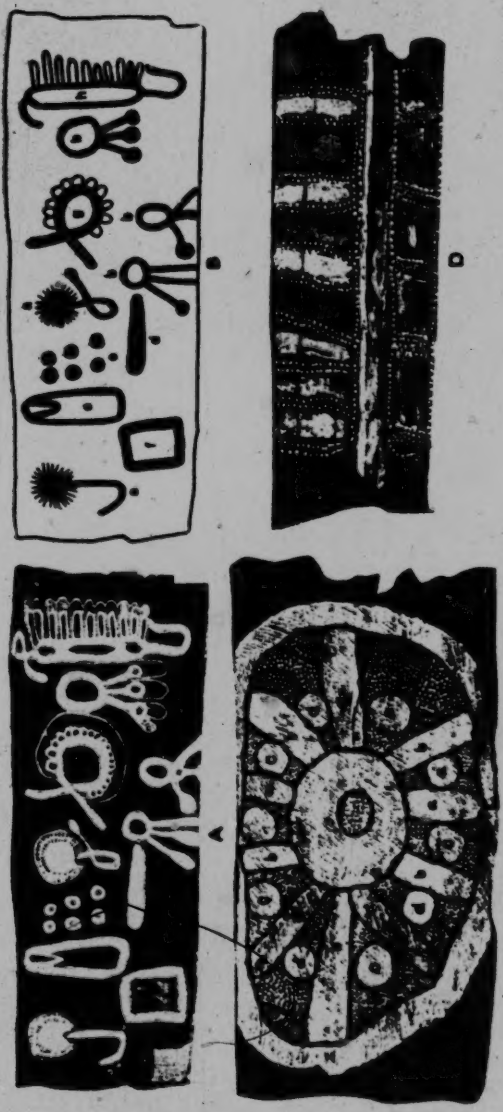

PLATE 43. *Bark Paintings of the Kulama Ceremony*
A, B, Kulama Ornaments; C, The Kulama Ceremony; D, Food Baskets at a Kulama Ceremony.

[p. 128 A]

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881
[516]
[137]

[H2]
[302]

A B C D

PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*

A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

[Cp. 1:28 B]

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chanting *kulama* songs. Later, the decorated initiate, now called a *Marukumuni*, is taken to the camp of the man who captured him. It is the duty of this man, now his guardian, to provide the initiate with food. However, he must not be given snakes, for such food would cause his joints to swell and become painful. 88 ●

The guardian takes the food he has collected to the *Marukumuni*'s wife who feeds her husband over a period of four days in the same manner as a *pukumuni* man is fed (Pl. 24a). Neither she, nor any of the food he eats must touch the initiate's body. The food left over from the meal is wrapped in paper-bark and burnt. After four days this taboo is lifted and the *Marukumuni* is free to hunt for and eat all foods, except snake.

(2) *The Eating of the Cycad Fruit*

About August, when the fruit of the cycad (*Cycas media*) is ripe, the *Marukumuni* is decorated with a new design (Pl. 42b). At the same time the leader of the *kulama* ceremony instructs the women of the camp to collect and prepare a considerable quantity of the cycad fruit. As the fruit in its raw state is highly poisonous, it has to be shelled, pounded out flat, and soaked in running water for three days before it is edible. When the fruit is ready for eating, the women, putting it in a number of bark baskets, stand them on either side of a log (Pl. 43d). [302] [252]

Then, while the women walk around the baskets, chanting the songs of the *kulama*, two *Mikingulas* wash the design (Pl. 42b), from the *Marukumuni's* body, and decorate him with a new one (Pl. 42c). This, he must renew continuously until he hears the first sounds of thunder (about mid-November). [533] [302]

As soon as these decorations are completed a member of each family picks up a basket, takes it to their camp, and all have a meal.

The *Marukumuni* initiate, however, is fed by his wife from a separate store of cycad fruit.

At the same time as the *kulama* leader sent the women of the camp to collect and prepare the cycad fruit for the *Marukumuni* rituals, he instructed the women of the *Kilipanietinga* grade to do the same. However, when the other women of the camp placed their baskets of prepared food beside the log, the *Kilipanietinga* women poured their cycad fruit on a nearby pad of grass, pushed four sticks into the ground around the heap and seated themselves on the outside.

The ceremonial activity then centred around the men and women of the *Kilipanimi* grade of initiation, who, from the previous *kulama* until then, 301 98

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[98] had worn continuously their curious ornaments, *mariguani* (Pl. 420),[81]
[301] around their necks as well as many cane and bark ornaments on their arms. During the whole of that period (about five months) they renewed their body paint continuously. They were not allowed, however, to scratch their heads with their hands, but must use for that purpose a special pointed stick, *murubunga* (Pl. 327).

The rituals began when one of the *Mikingulas*, coming up behind the male
[302] *Kilipaniati*, cut the *mariguani* from the neck of the initiate, poured water over him to remove his body paint, and decorated him with the design of a *W'adjeniati* (Pl. 421). Similarly, the husband of the female initiate cut her neck ornament, washed her and redecorated her as a *Wadjeniatinga*. After eating their store of cycad fruit, these new initiates resumed the normal life of the tribe.

About mid-November, thunder and other signs of the oncoming wet season are signals for the *Marukumuni* to discard the design he has been wearing since the ceremonial eating of the cycad fruit. As soon as this hap-
[301] pens the men paint another design on his body (Pl. 422), put new cockatoo
[302] feathers in his hair, and many cane armlets on his arms. The initiate wears these decorations, continuously renewing his body paint, until the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, which takes place at the beginning of the *kulama* ceremony about four months later.

3. THE KULAMA CEREMONY

(1) *Collecting and Eating the Edible Yams*

Toward the end of January, when the wet season was approaching its climax, the *kulama* leader instructed the women to go into the jungle, locate a number
[262] of the young plants of two species of edible yams, a long one, *jurugumi*, and a short one, *karawani* and show them to him so that he would know when they would be ready to eat.

When some weeks later, the leader estimated that the yams were fit for digging and the tall, annual grass was about to shed its seed, he called the people together and told them that the *kulama* rituals would start in a few days.[82]

[81] Spencer, 1928, Pl. IX, No. 4, illustrates a *mariguani*.

[82] From the time of this announcement until the finish of the *kulama* ceremony, no
[834] fully initiated man, must sleep with his wife. If he does, he will be attacked by *tsini*, the mysterious *kulama* sickness, and die. I did not find out the characteristics of the *kulama* sickness.

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On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[83] It is believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiasirinas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[84]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukumuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them ill.

[83] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[84] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

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● 88 ill. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of those grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372 759] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 881 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[88]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramaju also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[88] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

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how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamuni* ceremony. 177
(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because 533
I had had too much grog." 539
(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island 881
Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me."

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533
(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to 539
make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Palitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikintaras*, the 881
Mikiatarimas and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the [515]
men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42i). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted [584]
Palitara's gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man.
Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, [626]
will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Palitara*, [753]
to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present.

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

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led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinaras*, the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[89] Before digging, however, the *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringaleta*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *W'adjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[89] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

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Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *tunerapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A).

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringakua*, where the *Mikinatrinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46B).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[88] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wafjemiasi* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness.

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purujikini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry.

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs.

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement."

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *kinamia* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[88] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wapiguri* (my *Wafjemiasi*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wapiguri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wafjemiasi* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Milimirina* (Pl. 41E).

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533 539 ● 881 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for our fires."

(f) "The *nukwall* (shark) killed a stingray."

(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

[137] About 6.30 the next morning, the *Miktnastrinuga* women collected pieces of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Miktnastrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Miktngulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

[177] (i) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my children will go to school and wear boots."[84]

881 By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, including several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 533 539 The *Miktngulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series of songs.

[177] (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[85]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 765 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [84] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level than the one which he himself occupies.

[85] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

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After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father.

(*c*) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[88] when I think of you, my uncle." Some of the women cried when the song was finished.

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *saini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants.

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 44B), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[89] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purujikini*, did at the first *kulama*.

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women.

(*a*) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird).

(*b*) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 30B), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(*c*) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwianga*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(*d*) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(*e*) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(*f*) The buffalo,

(*g*) The shark (Pl. 30C).

[88] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions.

[89] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *warringalasa* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten.

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(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 252 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

881 When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the [827] hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

[177] [533] As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white man,[88] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst [412] [177] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipaniatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords [901] hanging from it, is called a *mariguni* (Pl. 42b). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjunguis*[89] (Pl. 42d and e), and cane

[88] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[89] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjunguis*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *aberiui*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

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arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, but took no part in the subsequent rituals. 881 [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniati* grade to the *wuringalasa* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniati* initiates with yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ularimi*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *tokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinatrina* and *Mikinatrininga* respectively. 881 302 [301]

After the *Wadjeniati* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[87] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[88] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinatrina* initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for some time. 535 881

At a given signal, each *Mikinatrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *juruwila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates. [201]

When the *Mikinatrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinatrininga*s, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinatrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniatis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs. [533]

[87] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[88] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

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177 *Wurerbui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to
533 dance before the Queen of England.
539 (*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor
881 cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *tedawali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, [535] *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 301). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamani* ceremony, [821] ending up in a loud *yei*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to
881 hear the *Mikinatrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinatrina* grade was invited by the

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Mikingulas to enter the *milimilis* and chant his first song, known as the *Ai-ipa*, which he had been practising for some time.[40] The female initiates, the *Mikinariningas* assisted the *Mikinarinas* by beating the time on the outside of the *milimilis* in the same way as *Pirtoma*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purujilkini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times.

One *Mikingula* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinarina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinarina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikinaras*, *Mikinarimas* and the fully initiated *Mikingulas*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[41]

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin."

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon."

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky."

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Kararijui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[42] These songs are called *kararijui imunka*.

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karsluke Island (Wulrungku), and are playing there."

[40] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinarina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinarina* becomes a *Mikinara* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikinarima*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikingula*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikinara* and *Mikinarima*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[41] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[42] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

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533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararitjui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Marauji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.

[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

[224] On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven, and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

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Three bark paintings relate to the *kulama* ceremony, i.e., Pl. 43A, B, Pl. 43C and Pl. 43D.

Pl. 43A, B, illustrates the ornaments used in a *kulama* ceremony.

Designs *a*, *a*, are two goose-feather balls, *tokwiangus* (Pl. 31B); *b*, *b*, etc., bark armlets, *tunguris*; *c*, unidentified; *d*, a throwing stick, *muruguna* (Pl. 32D); *e*, cane arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H); *f*, bark basket, *wanatuna*; *g*, false beard, *kuludi* (Pl. 31C), and *h*, a ceremonial belt, *ularimi*.

Pl. 43C illustrates the ceremonial circle, the oven and the performers of a *kulama* ceremony.

The central dotted circle is the oven (Pl. 46C), in which the yams are cooked, and the outer white oval, the mound of earth which surrounds the *milimika*. The ovals, *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the *Marukumuni*; *b*, *b*, etc., the *Wadjeniati*; *c*, the *Mikinatrina* initiates, and *d*, the fully initiated *Mikingulas*.

Pl. 43D is a bark painting showing baskets of prepared cycad fruit leaning against a log (p. 129). The horizontal panel is the log, and the rectangles on either side, the baskets of food leaning against it.

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PLATE 45. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A, Building the Kulama Fire; B, Placing the Kulama Yams in Water; C, Pressing Heated Sand against Joints; D, Deserted Kulama Oven.

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CONCLUSION

105 171 This study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

[174] Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural background (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life.

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 x532 (a) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

171 765 (b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

171 861 The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the ceremony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[66] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

[174] [66] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi.

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without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [281]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 expression as *int'abominaiiya* (=your wife) is forbidden, nor for example
843 can one of the woman's brothers enquire the whereabouts of his sister from the woman's husband. There is no such prohibition, however, against the use of her name nor against references to her by the rest of the tribe provided always the husband is not within hearing.

551 None of the names of a person passing through any stage of initiation
561 can be used by anyone at all. Such a person is always alluded to or
881 addressed as *Watyinyirti* or *Mikinyirtiya* or whatever degree of initiation he or she has reached. As the normal initiation ceremonies are carried out continuously from the age of seventeen to the age of about twenty-six for a man and from ten to nineteen for a girl, for those periods of their lives personal names are seldom used.

I propose to call these names "initiation-grade names," since they are applied to an individual according to the grade of initiation he has reached. A full list of them is as follows:—

Initiation-Grade Names (Male).

Average Age.		Duration of Grade.	
15-17	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarni*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-ati*
16-18	..	6 months	*Watyinyirti*
18-20	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiya*
19-21	..	1 year	*Mikin djira*
20-22	..	1 year	*Mikadjirima*
24-26	..	4 years	*Mikin gula*

Initiation-Grade Names (Female)[1].

10-12	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarniya*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-atiya*
11-13	..	6 months	*Watyinyirtiya*
13-15	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiyiya*
14-16	..	1 year	*Mikin djiriya*
15-17	..	1 year	*Mikadjiriniya*
19-21	..	4 years	*Mikin guliya*

551 In addition to these initiation-grade names there is also a series of
561 names which I propose to call "age-grade names." These are more

[1] In actual practice the female names are not nearly as commonly used as the male.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence. 551 844

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when passing through its various stages. When *Timalaykumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaykumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions. 553 881

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name. 553 587 768 593

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her 587 768 553

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf. J.* MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

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A Bathurst Island Initiation Rite.

Sir:

000 Not many white men can have had the experience of being tried by a native court. The following story may therefore be of interest.

114 I had visited a native camp in northern Bathurst Island in March 1913, and had made the acquaintance of an adolescent native boy called Cooper. He was smeared from head to foot with red ochre and wore a collar made of a thin piece of wood bent round his neck with the ends tied together with hair string behind with a strand of string about six inches long hanging down his back terminating in a blob of gum.

[p. 167-A]

881 He was in the *kolloponiati* stage of initiation
[901] grade and was forbidden in the camp. One
day in great secrecy he showed me some
bark arm bracelets known as *tuguti*. A
[114] month later I was on a Malay lugger in the
same region and some natives came out to
the lugger in canoes. They told me that
Cooper was to take the ceremony for his
next degree that afternoon. I persuaded
the master of the lugger to put me ashore on
Papiau beach, opposite old Fort Dundas.
123 The natives were unwilling to take me with
them at first, but finally consented. We
walked inland for about four miles and met
the main group, all painted for the ceremony.
Cooper was said to be out in the mangroves,
but came in shortly after about midday.
He then went out again for a sugar bag.
Having learned a few words of the language
I attempted conversation. After a time I
attempted to ask something about Cooper's
tuguti. Immediately the cheerful group
about me hushed and everyone seemed very
concerned. They had gained the impression
that I had stolen the *tuguti*. I tried to
explain that I had only looked at them.
About twenty of the men seated themselves
in a circle and proceeded to discuss the
problem. I overheard a few recognizable
words at times, *ardjidit waitamanna*, no
good white men, *paltoa*, dead, *yergobai*,
alligator. I was sitting meanwhile with
my back to a pandanus facing a salt water
inlet. An emissary from the circle visited
me from time to time and questioned me
anxiously about what I had done with the
tuguti. One humourist came over several
times, tapped me on the shoulder, and
grinningly pointed to the water, saying
yergobai. Suddenly the discussion stopped,
everybody stood up, and cordial relations
were resumed as if nothing had happened.

881 Cooper returned about 4 p.m. He washed
[313] and was smeared all over with red ochre
except the upper part of the face. Mean-

881 while a small trestle had been built of three upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the [343] form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a [411] flat bladed club, *irruella*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the [533] point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *cladini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was [439] presented with Cooper's *cladini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[Cp. 168 A]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *kilamini* comes from his body and will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *emuke:r* of the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatataka*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is snag with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

183 contract for a girl's primary marriage follows a consistent cultural
582 pattern.

In any discussion of a marriage system all the varieties of marriage contracts must be considered. If, however, one variety is [121] found to be more frequent, preferred, prescribed, or invariable, then that is the one to which all the others must be related. In the Tiwi marriage system there is no difficulty in determining which type of contract should be considered basic to the others. The initial contract which leads to a first marriage of a Tiwi girl is prescribed and invariable and is thus necessarily the most frequent from the point of view of a female Ego, and it is also a preferred contract from the point of view of a male Ego. In the following discussion, I shall refer to this type of contract as a Type A contract. Types B, C, and D are all contracts leading to secondary marriages of Tiwi widows and will be briefly discussed later.

584 A Type A contract is made during the five-day period in which
606 a girl is isolated in the bush at the time of her first menstrual period. Although she has been living with her first husband, she is separated from him at this time. When she again returns to her husband's [88] camp, she is not only considered to have reached the status of a woman but also that of a mother-in-law. While she is in the bush, her father places a spear between her legs as she sleeps and then presents it to a boy or man whom he selects to serve his daughter as a son-in-law. The spear is regarded by the recipient as a symbol of a bestowed wife yet to be born to his young mother-in-law. By accepting the spear, the son-in-law becomes obligated to his mother-in-law; from that moment on he must supply her with food and goods and such services as she may request at any time. In return, she is [582] held solely responsible for seeing that her first daughter is sent to his camp when she reaches the wifely age of eight or ten. After receiving the first daughter, the son-in-law is expected to continue his services to his wife's mother, in return for which he can expect to receive other daughters subsequently born to her. The initial contract continues until either the son-in-law or mother-in-law dies. If either fails to honor his obligation, however, the other may terminate the contract. A Type A contract is therefore essentially a contract between a mother-in-law and a son-in-law. The arranger of the contract is the mother-in-law's father.

582 The Tiwi, like the majority of Australian societies, consider cross-cousin marriage to be the proper form of marriage arrangements. For the sake of simplicity, I shall conduct the following analysis as if the preferential marriage pattern involved first cousins, although in fact it generally involves second cousins. For the purpose of viewing the system from the standpoint of relative age the distinction between a first and a second cousin is irrelevant. The question of classificatory cousins will be deferred until the kinship terminology is discussed.

The following analysis of Type A contracts in terms of the factor of relative age will show that the selection of a FaSiSo rather than a

601 582 It became apparent to me when I was collecting kinship terminology, that actual genealogical connection was an important factor in Tiwi kin classification and also, of course, in determining expected behavior. It is perhaps for this reason that I have always viewed the system of preferential marriage as concerned with actual second cross-cousins rather than with classificatory cross-cousins however distantly removed. First cross-cousins are definitely considered a "little-bit-wrong-way." Unfortunately my actual genealogies are too few and too shallow to shed much statistical light on the problem. It has also occurred to me that with extreme polygyny and obligatory remarriage there should be more first and second cross-cousins available to Ego than with monogamy or limited polygyny.

601 With their strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage it might be expected that the Tiwi would have a Sudanese type of cousin terminology in which cross-cousins would be terminologically differentiated on the basis of whom one could and could not marry. When I phrased this question to my women informants, however, I could find no such discrimination. Women do, nevertheless, make a terminological distinction between cross-cousins to whom they are technically married before birth and those whom they may marry in the future when and if their Type A contract lapses.

585 881 Here I must interject some additional ethnographic information. At the conclusion of a girl's puberty ceremony, she returns to the camp of her husband (*imbunei*), where she is painted. Then her husband and his brothers, all of whom she also calls *imbunei*, line up with the youngest first and the actual husband last. One by one they hit her with a feather pompom (*tokwiinga*) until the husband's turn arrives. At this point the girl runs, and her husband pursues her, catches her, and makes her kneel by a tree, which is marked. I have chosen to regard this ritual as a marriage ceremony in which the Type A contract is finally validated with all its ramifications. The [582] fact that the husband's brothers are terminologically classed even at this time with the actual husband and play a part in the marriage ceremony may be regarded as validating the continuance of the Type A contract through successive remarriages (of Type A2) to the younger brothers of the original holder of the contract.

587 601 If a woman survives all her *imbunei*, she becomes eligible to marry any of her other cross-cousins, either matrilateral or patrilateral, through contracts of Types B, C, or D. It is these cross-cousins, who did not become auxiliary "husbands" under her Type A contract, to whom she applies the term *mamaninya* or its variant, *mamanini*.

601 ## *Terminology in the First Ascending Generation*

11 *tiingani*: father; also FaBr, FaFaSo, FaFaBrSo, MoMoFa, MoMoFaBr. Affinal application: MoHu, MoMoMoHu, HuMoBr.

12 *ingwari*: mother; also MoSi, MoMoDa, MoMoMoDa, FaFaSiDa. Affinal application: FaWi, MoMoFaWi, HuFaSi.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

582 [587] [178] [601]

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania. 114 121
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another. [122]
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock. 600
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above). 833
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche. 881

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